HER MAJESTYS STATE PAPER OFFICE

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CHARLES, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all and singular Arch-bishops, Bishops, Arch-deacons, Deanes, and their Officials, Parsons, Vicars, Curates; and to all spirituall persons; And also to all Justices of peace, Mayors, Sheriffes, Bayliffes, Constables Church-wardens, and Head-boroughs; and to all Officers of Cities, Boroughs and Townes corporate, and to all other our Officers, Ministers and Subiects whatsoeuer they bee, as well within Liberties as without, to whom these presents shall come, greeting.

Whereas we are giuen to vnderstand, as well by the humble Supplication and Petition of our poore distressed Subiects, the Inhabitants of our Towne of Cambridge, as also by the speciall and earnest recommendation of the most Reuerend Father in God, our right trustie and wel-beloued Councellour, George, Lord Arch-bishop of Canterburie, Primate and Metropolitane of all England, the Reuerend Fathers in God our right trustie and wel beloued Counsellors, William, Lord Bishop of London, Richard, Lord Bishop of Winchester, and Iohn Lord Bishop of Lincolne, That by reason of a grieuous Visitation, in this time of the great contagion of the Plague amongst our said poore Subiects, the distressed Inhabitants of our said Towne of Cambridge, are left in great misery and decay: for the Vniuersitie fearing the rage thereof, haue broken vp and left their Colledges, and the number of poore people in the said Towne being very great, and many of them aged and impotent, and such as whilest the Schollers continued there, had much relieue by meanes of them, now the Colledges being left, are like to famish, and many others of our said poore Subiects, who heretofore liued by their Commerce and Traffique, as well with the Schollers as with the Countrey, and maintained themselues and Families in good sort, and did helpe and releeue others, are now by this grieuous Visitation brought into great want, and their trading with the Countrey being now (out of a kinde of necessity) wholly forborne, they also are forced to craue relieue, so as the whole number that receiue relieue and maintenance, are aboue two thousand and eight hundred persons (besides those that are visited with the Plague) the charge whereof doth and will amount to one Hundred and Fiftie Pounds a weeke at the least, which charge the Vniuersity and Towne are no wayes able to disburse, there being not aboue Seauen-score persons at the most of the said Inhabitants, that are able any longer to contribute towards their relieue, their estates being much weakened by the dayly Taxations already layd vpon them, for the maintenance of the visited Persons, and other poore people.

Wee taking these things into our Princely consideration, and for that the said Lord Arch-bishop of Canterburie, and the said other three Lord Bishops, hauing vpon our Reference certified vnder their hands, the great necessity that the Inhabitants of the said Towne should be speedily relieued, and that they find no better meanes for effecting thereof, then by the printing and issuing forth of Brieues, for the Collection of the benevolence of charitable people, within their Foure seuerall Dioceses, with some fauourable clauses for the better and more sure and speedy gathering thereof.

Wee haue thereupon resolued to commend the distressed estates of these poore soules vnto the Charities of all our people within the seuerall Dioceses hereafter mentioned, by granting them our gracious Letters Patents to that purpose; Not doubting, but that all good Christians duely considering the miserie and pittifull calamity, which so many of their poore distressed and dejected Brethren doe vndergoe, by such an inevitable and grieuous Visitation, will in their owne pious commiseration of their great extremity be herewith moued, out of the bowels of compassion, and forward as feeling members one of anothers miseries, freely and willingly to extend their liberall Contributions towards the relieue and comfort of a number of wretched Creatures in this their great necessitie.

Know yee therefore that Wee, well weighing the woefull and lamentable estate of our said poore and distressed Subiects, and commiserating the same of our especiall grace and principall compassion, doe order and graunt that a Collection be made of the charitable deuotions and liberalities of all Our louing Subiects within the seuerall Dioceese of Canterburie, London, Winchester and Lincolne, and within the Iurisdictions and Liberties of Westminster, and in all Cities, Townes Corporate, Priuiledged places, Parishes, Villages, and in all other places whatsoeuer within the aforesaid Dioceses, for and towards the Releefe and Succour of the said poore distressed Inhabitants of Cambridge aforesaid. Which Collection We will graunt, appoint, and require shall bee ordered in manner and forme following: That is to say, We will graunt, appoint and require all and singular Parsons, Vicars and Curates of the seuerall Churches and Chappels within the Dioceses, Precincts and places afore mentioned, with all possible speed to publish and recommend this Collection to the charity of all well-disposed persons within their Churches and Precincts, with an especiall exhortation to the people, for the better stirring vp of their liberall and extraordinary Contributions in so good and charitable a deed.

And we also will and require the Chancellor or Commissary of euery the said Dioceses, together with two or more Justices of the Peace, to be nominated by the said Lord Arch-bishop and Bishops within their seuerall Dioceses, respectiuely shall take care of the furthering of the said Collection, and shall appoint the Constables, and other Officers to assist the Church-wardens and Side-men to collect this charitable relieue, either in the seuerall Churches, or from house to house in euery Parish and Precinct, as the Minister and Church-wardens shall conceiue to be best behoofull for aduancing of the profit, and what shall be by them so gathered to be by the Minister and Churchwardens endorsed on the back-side of the Brieue of these our Letters Patents, in words at length and not in figures; and the summe and summes of money so gathered and endorsed to deliuer to the said Justices, Chancellor, or Commissary, together with the said Brieue to be by some of them from their seuerall diuisions speedily sent to the Vice-Chancellor and Mayor of Cambridge, for and towards the relieue and comfort of the poore Inhabitants of the said Towne.

And wee also will and require, that within the Citie of London, and liberties thereof, euery Alderman in his seuerall Ward, shall appoint the Constables to ioyne with the Church-wardens, to collect this charitable releife, either in the Church, or from house to house, as the Ministers and Church-wardens shall iudge to be most conducent, for the furtherance of this collection, and the moneyes so collected to be by some one of them, together with the brieue hereof endorsed with the hands of the Minister, and Church-wardens of euery Parish, deliuered to the Alderman of that ward, who is also desired to send the same, vnto the Vice-chancellor and Mayor of Cambridge, to be imployed, and disposed of, according to the direction hereafter.

Lastly we will and require that within the Iurisdiction of Westminster, there be nominated by the Lord Bishop of Lincolne Deane of Wistminster, such as he shall thinke fit to assist the Church-wardens, in the collection of this charitable benevolence, in the Church or otherwise, as the said Lord Bishop shall appoint, and the summe and summes of money so gathered, to be by some one of them deliuered with the brieue indorsed by the Minister, and Church-wardens to two Justices of the Peace in Wistminster, to be nominated by the said Lord Bishop of Lincolne, to be by them conueyed to the Vice-chancellor and Mayor of Cambridge aforesaid who are hereby desired to bee carefull, that all the money sent them, by vertue of this collection, may be distributed to and amongst the Poore of the said Towne in such manner, and by such proportions, as they in their discretions shall thinke fit and needfull to pertake thereof, according to the purport and true meaning of our gracious intention, by these our Letters Patents, any Statute, Law, ordinance, or prouision heretofore made to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

In witnesse whereof, Wee haue caused these our Letters to bee made Patents for the space of one whole yeere next after the Date hereof to endure. Witnesse Our selfe at Westminster, the fiue and twentieth day of Iune, in the fifth yeare of our Reigne. *Dawe.*

God saue the King.

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